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SIPDIS

FOR NEA/ARP AMACDONALD AND G/TIP SAHLUWALIA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KTIP](#) [ELAB](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [KMCA](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#)
YM
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE RESPONSE: IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILD
SOLDIERS PREVENTION ACT

REF: STATE 121328

11. PolOff delivered reftel demarche and non-paper on December 14 to Khalil Mohammed of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) Two Americas Department and Amani Ali Salih al-Wathai, assistant to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Muhi al-Dhabbi. Mohammed and Wathai accepted the points of the demarche, and countered that Yemeni law clearly forbids the participation of anyone under the age of 18 in Yemen's armed services. Mohammed said that the problem of child soldiers in Yemen is not endemic; it is much smaller than is reported by some media outlets and non-governmental organizations. Amani admitted, however, that the problem is compounded by Yemeni tribal culture, which traditionally requires boys as young as 14 or 15 to get married and defend their family and tribe.

12. PolOff discussed with Mohammed and Wathai the serious implications in terms of lost military assistance if Yemen is identified in 2010 as being a country that has governmental armed forces or government-supported armed groups that recruit and use child soldiers. Both were eager to prevent Yemen from losing "badly needed" assistance from the U.S. It was decided that another meeting would be held between PolOff and the MFA in early 2010. At that time, the MFA will make its case about what the ROYG is doing to prevent and combat the problem of child soldiers in Yemen.
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